

C.) AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of the claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the Application. **(Andrew, my only thought is that we could insert "compressed" in line 4, so as to read "an infiltrated compressed nonwoven mat". What do you think?)**

1. (currently amended) An improved ceramic matrix composite laminate comprising:

a plurality of preform lamina, each of the preform lamina being formed of directional continuous ceramic fiber in a ceramic matrix;

an infiltrated compressed nonwoven mat including a nonwoven mat formed of a plurality of chopped ceramic fibers ~~in~~ and a ceramic matrix, the nonwoven mat being interposed and compressed between an interface of adjacent ~~preformed continuous fiber lamina of the plurality of preform lamina~~ so as to form an interface between the continuous fiber lamina which reduces voids and prevents a continuous, stratified matrix rich layer substantially remove the interface between the adjacent ~~continuous fiber preform lamina; and~~

~~wherein the ceramic matrix of the preform lamina and of the layer of nonwoven mat has been infiltrated into the preform lamina and the layer of nonwoven mat, the infiltrated nonwoven mat formed by filling the void spaces of a dry, porous nonwoven mat perform with a ceramic material, the ceramic material filling the void spaces being substantially free of voids, the adjacent preformed continuous fiber lamina having the infiltrated nonwoven mat interposed between being substantially free of a continuous, stratified matrix rich layer between adjacent infiltrated preformed continuous fiber lamina.~~

2. (cancelled)
3. (currently amended) The ceramic matrix composite laminate of claim 2 wherein the nonwoven ~~chopped fiber~~ mat after being interposed and compressed between adjacent ~~continuous fiber preform lamina of the at least two preform lamina~~ is from about 0.001 inches to about 0.002 inches thick.

4. (currently amended) The ceramic matrix composite laminate of claim 1 wherein the ~~nonwoven mat~~ plurality of chopped ceramic fibers comprise ~~is comprised~~ of randomly oriented chopped fibers.
5. (currently amended) The ceramic matrix composite laminate of claim 1 wherein the chopped ceramic fibers are less than about one inch in length.
6. (cancelled)
7. (cancelled)
8. (currently amended) The ceramic matrix composite laminate of claim 1 wherein the nonwoven mat ~~being~~ interposed between an interface of adjacent preform lamina ~~of the plurality of preform lamina~~ reduces the number of inter-laminar voids.
9. (currently amended) The ceramic matrix composite laminate of claim 1 wherein the nonwoven mat being interposed and compressed between adjacent preform lamina ~~of the plurality of preform lamina~~ reduces the size of inter-laminar voids.
10. (currently amended) The ceramic matrix composite laminate of claim 1 wherein the nonwoven mat being interposed and compressed between adjacent preform lamina ~~of the plurality of preform lamina~~ reduces the volume fraction of inter-laminar voids.
11. (currently amended) The ceramic matrix composite laminate of claim 1 wherein the nonwoven mat being interposed and compressed between adjacent preform lamina ~~of the plurality of preform lamina~~ uniformly distributes the inter-laminar voids.
12. (currently amended) The ceramic matrix composite laminate of claim 1 wherein ~~porosity of~~ the nonwoven mat has a porosity ~~is~~ from about 50 percent to about 90 percent.
13. (currently amended) The ceramic matrix composite laminate of claim 1 wherein ~~porosity of~~ the nonwoven mat has a porosity ~~is~~ from about 80 percent to about 90 percent.
14. (previously presented) The ceramic matrix composite laminate of claim 1 wherein the chopped ceramic fibers are from about 0.0004 inches to about 0.0008 inches in diameter.

15. (previously presented) The ceramic matrix composite laminate of claim 1 wherein the chopped ceramic fibers are comprised of SiC.
16. (previously presented) The ceramic matrix composite laminate of claim 1 wherein the ceramic matrix is comprised of SiC.
17. (previously presented) The ceramic matrix composite laminate of claim 1 wherein the nonwoven mat is comprised of different ceramic fiber materials.
18. (previously presented) The ceramic matrix composite laminate of claim 1 wherein the nonwoven mat is comprised of a different material than the plurality of continuous fiber preform lamina.
19. (currently amended) The ceramic matrix composite laminate of claim 1 wherein a plurality of layers of the nonwoven mat is interposed between ~~at least one~~ an interface of adjacent ~~continuous fiber preform lamina of the plurality of continuous fiber preform lamina.~~
20. (previously presented) The ceramic matrix composite laminate of claim 19 wherein at least one layer of the plurality of layers of the nonwoven mat is ~~comprised of~~ comprises a different material than the remaining layers of the plurality of layers of the nonwoven mat.
- 21-27. (canceled)
28. (currently amended) An improved ceramic matrix composite laminate comprising:
- a plurality of preform lamina, each ~~of the~~ preform lamina being formed of directional continuous ceramic fiber in a ceramic matrix;
 - an infiltrated nonwoven mat including a nonwoven mat formed of a plurality of randomly oriented chopped ~~ceramic~~ fibers ~~in and~~ a ceramic matrix, the ~~infiltrated~~ nonwoven mat being compressively interposed between an interface of adjacent ~~preformed continuous fiber lamina of the plurality of~~ preform lamina, wherein the layer is formed from a dry, nonwoven mat preform, the nonwoven mat forming an interface between the continuous fiber lamina; and so as to substantially remove the interface between the adjacent preform lamina

~~wherein a matrix of compatible ceramic material has been infiltrated into the preform lamina and the nonwoven mat to form the ceramic matrix composite laminate, the infiltrated nonwoven mat having ceramic material filling the void spaces of a dry, porous nonwoven mat preform, the ceramic material filling the void spaces being substantially free of voids and substantially free of continuous, stratified matrix rich layer between adjacent continuous fiber preform lamina.~~

29. (currently amended) The ceramic matrix composite laminate of claim 27 28 wherein the plurality of randomly oriented chopped fibers are less than about one inch in length.

30. (currently amended) The ceramic matrix composite laminate of claim 27 28 wherein the plurality of randomly oriented chopped fibers are ceramic fibers.

31. (currently amended) The ceramic matrix composite laminate of claim 27 28 wherein the plurality of randomly oriented chopped fibers are a plurality of ceramic fiber compositions.